

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Afton Chemical Corporation

Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center

Afton Chemical Corporation Increases Output with Assistance from IMEC

Client Profile:

Afton Chemical Corporation develops and manufactures petroleum additives that enhance the performance of lubricating oils and fuels in machinery, vehicles and other equipment. The company employs 270 people at its facility in Sauget, Illinois.

Situation:

Afton Chemical ships fuel additives in 55 gallon drums, tank cars, tank trucks, and ISO containers to customers throughout the world. At its Sauget, Illinois plant, physical space limitations, combined with a strong international demand, prompted the company to look for solutions to increase the capacity to ship more drums, better manage inventory and eliminate non-value-added operations. Afton Chemical contacted the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help.

Solution:

Using Value Stream Mapping as a foundation, IMEC and the Afton Chemical team focused on reducing drum handling, drum preparation, and the shipping processes. At the same time, the team developed new production approaches to reduce product travel distance and cut material handling in half. IMEC also helped team members identify additional areas where they could reduce waste, contain costs, and improve the working relationship with the Sauget warehouse labor force.

Results:

- * Increased drum shipments by 24 percent.
- * Improved on-time delivery by 97.2 percent.

Testimonial:

"We were extremely pleased with the training and implementation support from the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center. Their team helped us achieve our goals of introducing process improvements and increasing drum output quickly and easily."

Susan Squires, Manager of Logistics and Purchasing